

SHOW FILES

File 20:Dialog Global Reporter 1997-2002/Jun 12
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File 608:KR/T Bus.News. 1992-2002/Jun 12
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File 630:Los Angeles Times 1993-2002/Jun 12
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File 755:New Zealand Newspapers 1995-2002/Jun 11
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File 813:PR Newswire 1987-1999/Apr 30
(c) 1999 PR Newswire Association Inc

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Set	Items	Description
S1	12	EBAY? AND (AUCTION? OR BID?) AND PD<=960904
S2	10	RD (unique items)
?		

T S2/FULL/6

2/9/6 (Item 5 from file: 608)

DIALOG(R) File 608:KR/T Bus.News.

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06644801 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)

Austin, Texas, Firefighter's Virtual Persona Auctioned for \$521

Omar L. Gallaga

Austin American-Statesman, Texas

March 09, 1996

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER

RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 267

TEXT: By Omar L. Gallaga, Austin American-Statesman, Texas

Mar. 9--An Austin firefighter has turned 500,000 pieces of cybergold into \$521 in cold cash by auctioning off his online persona.

Dave Turner had amassed his virtual fortune by playing Ultima Online, the Internet-based fantasy game, for 40 hours a week over the past year in his off hours from the fire department.

Ultima Online, created by Austin's Origin Systems, is a medieval virtual world inhabited by players from around the world. Players build up skills while amassing money and items in the game.

Turner's main character in the game, Sir Turbohawk, had nearly maxed out his attributes and was a wealthy warrior with about 500,000 gold pieces.

Ultimately, a new part-time job sidetracked Turner from the action. "It takes a lot of time to be competitive in Ultima Online," he said. "I realized I wouldn't have the time to keep doing it."

Bidding began at \$39 dollars. Over the seven days the auction ran, 43 bids upped the price to \$521. The winner was a player from Brooklyn, who will take over where Turner left off.

While game trading and specialized sales are nothing new on Ebay, which handles millions of individual sales, the sale of a virtual character is a new twist.

Turner said he didn't expect to receive more than \$100 from the sale, and was amazed to see the price jump every day.

Visit Austin 360, the World Wide Web site of the Austin American-Statesman, at <http://www.austin360.com>

(c) 1996, Austin American-Statesman, Texas. Distributed by Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News.

COMPANY NAMES: Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News ; Origin Systems ;
Ultima Online

DESCRIPTORS: Computers

TICKER SYMBOLS: EBAY

?

2/9/5 (Item 4 from file: 608)

DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.

(c)2002 Knight Ridder/Tribune Bus News. All rts. reserv.

06684043 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)

Dell Launches Auction Site for Used Computers

Omar L. Gallaga

Austin American-Statesman, Texas

July 20, 1996

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER

RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 491

TEXT: By Omar L. Gallaga, Austin American-Statesman, Texas

Jul. 20--Dell Computer Corp. already is the world's most profitable computer company.

Now Dell has found a way to make money off its competitors' computers, too.

On Monday, Dell launched dellauctions.com, a computer auction site where users can sell their own used goods alongside Dell's products. Round Rock-based Dell will make \$2 every time someone lists an item on the site -- even a computer made by its chief competitor, Houston-based Compaq Computer Corp.

Riding the crest of high flying consumer auction Web sites such as eBay Inc. and Ubid Inc., dellauctions.com had several hundred thousand hits in its first eight hours and more than 1,000 items up for sale, the company said. On the auction site, Dell is allowing, even encouraging, users to hawk used wares ranging from computers to Palm Pilots to keyboards.

While the site allows users to buy and sell their own goods, dellauctions.com is also a clearinghouse for the company's own products -- many of which are refurbished or older computers that have been returned after a leasing period.

Dell is hoping visitors to the site will unload their old computers and peripherals and then click over and shop at dell.com, the company's flagship sales site, with their newfound cash.

"We're positioning ourselves as the first major computer company to offer auction services," said Robert Langer, director of dell.com. "It gives our customers another outlet to dispose of older machinery and take advantage of purchasing new products from Dell."

How lucrative can catering to the highest online bidder be?

Forrester Research Inc. estimates consumer auctions will grow from a sales volume of \$1.4 billion in 1998 to \$19 billion in 2003. And the makeup of auction sites will shift from predominantly person-to-person to business-to-consumer auctions.

James Carney, president of Bidder's Edge, a site that tracks bargains at online auction sites, said there are about 400 auction sites, but added that established companies such as Dell may have an advantage in attracting new business.

"The greatest growth is in the merchant side, in the stores," Carney said. "That business will be literally two-thirds greater than person-to-person bidding in the next 24 months."

A peek at the site on Monday revealed that of the computers that aren't being sold by Dell, many were being unloaded by no-name computer vendors using the site to sell their own surplus computers.

For the first 60 days, listings on dellauctions.com are free. But after that, a \$2 fee for listing an item applies to all products.

Dell's Langer said Monday the site exceeded expectations with minimal advertising and promotion from the company.

Visit Austin 360, the World Wide Web site of the Austin American-Statesman, at <http://www.austin360.com>

(c) 1996, Austin American-Statesman, Texas. Distributed by Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News.

COMPANY NAMES: Bay Inc ; Compaq Computer Corp ; Dell Computer Corp ; Edge
; Forrester Research Inc ; Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News ; Ubid Inc

DESCRIPTORS: Computers

TICKER SYMBOLS: DELL; CPQ; EBAY

?

2/9/3 (Item 2 from file: 608)

DIALOG(R) File 608:KR/T Bus.News.

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06699300 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)

Toy Maker to Cease Sale of Beanie Babies

John Pletz

Austin American-Statesman, Texas

September 02, 1996

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER

RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 562

TEXT: By John Pletz, Austin American-Statesman, Texas

Sep. 2--Retired, yes. Buried, no.

That's the word on Beanie Babies, the popular bean-filled toy creatures that have been popular collectibles with children, teens and adults.

Beanie manufacturer Ty Inc. created a minor uproar Tuesday when it posted a message on its Web site that it would retire its lineup of critters Dec. 31.

The vague message, which followed a list of 10 new Beanie Babies due out this month, had many wondering if Ty was getting out of the business.

"A bunch of people panicked," said Jack Ball, manager at Pat's Beanies & More, a shop at 3317 Hancock Drive in North Austin. "People have been calling for two days. Sales tripled."

Some retailers said they suspect that's just what Ty and its namesake owner, Ty Warner, had in mind.

"Personally, my thoughts on it are it's a marketing scheme," said Cari Cox, assistant manager at Always Collectible in Highland Mall.

Officials at Ty, which has an unlisted phone number, aren't talking.

For several weeks, Ty's Web site had been promoting "a news flash" for Aug. 31. The company periodically discontinues or "retires" individual characters, retailers said. Only 47 of the 300 Beanies produced are "current" in collector parlance. The rest already have been retired.

This time the announcement was earlier than usual.

Ball said he thinks it's Ty Warner's way of making sure that retailers can get product moving. The summer's shipment of Beanies is still taking up space on shelves, and the Christmas season is coming quickly.

"(Warner) knows what he's doing," Ball said. "He's smart as hell. He's a great marketer."

Pat Johnson, the Pat behind Pat's Beanies, said it was unlikely for that a company that recently expanded into five new countries across Europe and Asia would abandon its business.

Some customers said Wednesday they weren't falling for Ty's gimmick, either.

"It's just a ploy," said Sherrie Frachtman, who stopped at Johnson's store for a birthday present, not a Beanie Baby.

She said her 7-year-old daughter, Adrienne, did hear about the retirement at school and asked whether the Beanies she collects were going away for good.

Many Beanie collectors took to the Internet after the announcement, offering their wares on auction services such as eBay and collecting.nation.com. But for the most part, prices didn't seem any higher than normal, ranging from \$2.50 to about \$50.

Beanies sell for \$6.99 new at retailers. But once retired, they fetch more. Some extremely rare Beanies have commanded more than \$1,000.

Although Ty, a private company, doesn't disclose sales figures, Beanie Babies have been wildly successful from a marketing standpoint.

"I have an 8-year-old daughter, and we have countless Beanie Babies," said Meme Drumwright, an assistant professor of advertising at the University of Texas. "But even older boys collected these. My aunt has a friend in her 70s who has a whole room full of these. Many other toy products have captivated one market, but very few have been able to span

the age groups."

Visit Austin 360, the World Wide Web site of the Austin American-Statesman, at <http://www.austin360.com>

(c) 1996, Austin American-Statesman, Texas. Distributed by Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News.

COMPANY NAMES: Always Collectible ; Beanies & More ; Johnson ; Knight
Ridder/Tribune Business News ; Pat ; Ty Inc ; University of Texas

DESCRIPTORS: Marketing/Retail

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B 20,147,608,630,755,813

12jun02 12:07:30 User264717 Session D137.4

\$25.81 14.746 DialUnits File411

\$25.81 Estimated cost File411

\$2.16 INTERNET

\$27.97 Estimated cost this search

\$62.46 Estimated total session cost 31.288 DialUnits

SYSTEM:OS - DIALOG OneSearch

File 20:Dialog Global Reporter 1997-2002/Jun 12

(c) 2002 The Dialog Corp.

File 147:The Kansas City Star 1995-2002/Jun 12

(c) 2002 Kansas City Star

File 608:KR/T Bus.News. 1992-2002/Jun 12

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File 630:Los Angeles Times 1993-2002/Jun 12

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File 755:New Zealand Newspapers 1995-2002/Jun 11

(c) 2002 INL

File 813:PR Newswire 1987-1999/Apr 30

(c) 1999 PR Newswire Association Inc

Set	Items	Description
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T S2/3,KWIC/1-10

2/3,KWIC/1 (Item 1 from file: 20)
DIALOG(R)File 20:Dialog Global Reporter
(c) 2002 The Dialog Corp. All rts. reserv.

05400469 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)
INSIDER TRADING - CHIRPING CELLPHONES ARE THE BANE OF SPEAKERS PRESENTATION
Iain Scott
BUSINESS DAY (SOUTH AFRICA), p2
May 13, 1999
JOURNAL CODE: FBUD LANGUAGE: English RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT
WORD COUNT: 1053

(USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)

... week that a consortium of Rennies Travel and El Shaddai Equity Investments were the preferred bidders for Transnets Connex Travel.

Both Rennies and El Shaddai Equity Investments were surprised on being

... sale. Neither, it appears, had signed the necessary agreement to secure their position as preferred bidder. This effectively means there had been no formal notification on the part of the seller...

...computer boffins.

A team of 16 internet service provider engineers have listed themselves on internet auction company EBays website, opening the bidding at \$3,14m. The team works for a major internet service provider, and wants to leave as a group. Only buyers in Silicon Valley are asked to submit bids for the warm bodies and their brains.

EMPLOYEES of SA Airways have up to now...

19990513

2/3,KWIC/2 (Item 1 from file: 608)
DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.
(c)2002 Knight Ridder/Tribune Bus News. All rts. reserv.

06802876 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)
Bellevue, Wash., Man Sells Dolls in Likeness of Baseball Players
Luke Timmerman
2000
August , 2081
DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
WORD COUNT: 640

...TEXT: empty-handed. Even though the dolls cost the teams about \$5, some Twins fans have bid them up on eBay for \$140.
That's quite a bit of excitement for a town where plenty of...

2/3,KWIC/3 (Item 2 from file: 608)
DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.
(c)2002 Knight Ridder/Tribune Bus News. All rts. reserv.

06699300 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)
Toy Maker to Cease Sale of Beanie Babies
John Pletz
Austin American-Statesman, Texas
September 02, 1996
DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
WORD COUNT: 562

...TEXT: good.

Many Beanie collectors took to the Internet after the announcement, offering their wares on auction services such as eBay and collecting.nation.com. But for the most part, prices didn't seem any higher ...

2/3,KWIC/4 (Item 3 from file: 608)

DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.

(c)2002 Knight Ridder/Tribune Bus News. All rts. reserv.

06698352 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)

Austin, Texas, Internet Startups Stay Cloaked in Secrecy

Heather Cocks

Austin American-Statesman, Texas

August 28, 1996

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 1785

...TEXT: flood of identical sites.

Williams of Forrester Research pointed to the recent surge in reverse-auction Web sites. In the past month, respond.com, eWanted.com and iWant.com all entered...

...no clear market winner, the door is open for established sites like Amazon.com and eBay to nip those companies' growth in the bud, Williams said.

Although they may not beat smaller companies to the market, huge e-commerce sites like Amazon.com and eBay can play on customer loyalty, use existing resources to add new e-commerce departments and...

2/3,KWIC/5 (Item 4 from file: 608)

DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.

(c)2002 Knight Ridder/Tribune Bus News. All rts. reserv.

06684043 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)

Dell Launches Auction Site for Used Computers

Omar L. Gallaga

Austin American-Statesman, Texas

July 20, 1996

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 491

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...TEXT: make money off its competitors' computers, too.

On Monday, Dell launched dellauctions.com, a computer auction site where users can sell their own used goods alongside Dell's products. Round Rock...

...its chief competitor, Houston-based Compaq Computer Corp.

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...their newfound cash.

"We're positioning ourselves as the first major computer company to offer auction services," said Robert Langer, director of dell.com. "It gives our customers another outlet to...

...advantage of purchasing new products from Dell."

How lucrative can catering to the highest online bidder be?

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...stores," Carney said. "That business will be literally two-thirds greater than person-to-person bidding in the next 24 months."

A peek at the site on Monday revealed that of...

2/3,KWIC/6 (Item 5 from file: 608)

DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.

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06644801 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)

Austin, Texas, Firefighter's Virtual Persona Auctioned for \$521

Omar L. Gallaga

Austin American-Statesman, Texas

March 09, 1996

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 267

Austin, Texas, Firefighter's Virtual Persona Auctioned for \$521

...LEAD PARAGRAPH: Austin firefighter has turned 500,000 pieces of cybergold into \$521 in cold cash by auctioning off his online persona.

...TEXT: Austin firefighter has turned 500,000 pieces of cybergold into \$521 in cold cash by auctioning off his online persona.
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...Online," he said. "I realized I wouldn't have the time to keep doing it."

Bidding began at \$39 dollars. Over the seven days the auction ran, 43 bids upped the price to \$521. The winner was a player from Brooklyn, who will take over where Turner left off.
While game trading and specialized sales are nothing new on Ebay, which handles millions of individual sales, the sale of a virtual character is a new...

2/3,KWIC/7 (Item 1 from file: 630)

DIALOG(R)File 630:Los Angeles Times

(c) 2002 Los Angeles Times. All rts. reserv.

01486009 (USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

ONLY IN L.A.

Heartbreak Hotel--for the Management

STEVE HARVEY

Los Angeles Times, Home Edition ed, colB, p3

Thursday December 16, 1999

DOCUMENT TYPE: Column

SECTION HEADING: Metro Desk

WORD COUNT: 484

(USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

TEXT:

EBay magazine reports that someone paid \$4,600 for this item at a recent

auction of Elvis memorabilia:

A \$695 bill from the Beverly Wilshire Hotel for "damage to Suite...

2/3,KWIC/8 (Item 2 from file: 630)

DIALOG(R)File 630:Los Angeles Times

(c) 2002 Los Angeles Times. All rts. reserv.

01485965 (USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

STEVE HARVEY

The Beverly Wilshire: All Shook Up

STEVE HARVEY

Los Angeles Times , Orange County Edition ed, colB, p3

Thursday December 16, 1999

DOCUMENT TYPE: Column; Regional version of a story in Home Edition

SECTION HEADING: Metro Desk

WORD COUNT: 225

(USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

TEXT:

EBay magazine reports that someone paid \$4,600 for this item at a recent auction of Elvis memorabilia:

A \$695 bill from the Beverly Wilshire Hotel for "damage to Suite...

2/3,KWIC/9 (Item 1 from file: 755)

DIALOG(R)File 755:New Zealand Newspapers

(c) 2002 INL. All rts. reserv.

00549177 SST20000924-130147-MG (USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

Internet nails the hammer

HENDERSON Mark

Sunday Star Times , A ed, colC, p11

24 SEP 2000

JOURNAL CODE: SST RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT

WORD COUNT: 00000996

(USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

TEXT:

Choice rather than bargains is the big attraction of online auction sites, writes Mark Henderson.

THERE's no oily spruicker revving up the crowd, no smart spiel goading nervous bidders , no heart-racing tension, and no hammer.

But despite - or perhaps because of - the absence of contrived drama, internet auctions have a huge fan club. Millions of items, from rarities to race cars, are bought and sold every day through silent bidding . Net auctions have hit their straps in the past five years with better cyberspace security and creative site management and service.

One of the first online personal trader pioneers was ebay .com The site now has 12.6 million registered users, including thousands in New Zealand...

...music, automobiles and toys.

Aucklander Brian Coleman, an avid collector of Royal Winton china, has bid for hundreds of pieces over the past 12 months and scored 30.

"Initially, I was...

...A coffee pot was slightly more cracked than could be detected from its net photo.

Ebay , is his favoured site: "It's well set out and easy to navigate."

Coleman's recent auction buys include a dinner set from Canada, a

cup and saucer from the US and...

...overseas.

Coleman warns buyers to factor in freight charges and the exchange rate (sites list bids in US dollars). Popular currency converters are The Universal Currency Converter at www.xe.net...

...freighting is hideously expansive," laments Coleman.

Buying and selling at the growing crop of internet auctions is easy. You simply pull up the site and register: name, email, and often credit...

...be asked to create a password and user name, identifying you as a bona fide bidder each time you log on to the site. Sellers can be individuals, auction houses and stores.

The best way to check out reliability is look at feedback ratings from buyers posted alongside seller listings on major auction sites. It is up to the buyer to authenticate a piece and determine its value...

...It's a good idea to also discuss freight charges with the seller. As a bidder, you simply decide how much you want to pay and raise the highest posted bid. Auctions take 7-10 days and you can watch the bidding progress anywhere.

Sue Henderson discovered net auctions two months ago. She was keen to add to her collection of Wade and Maling china. "It's exciting watching bidding progress. I'm hooked." She has confined herself to small purchases, so far two jugs and a dish, all under \$50. She never bids without viewing the photos, but says "in the end, you have to go on instinct".

Internet bidders in New Zealand concede they probably don't save money buying in the global marketplace...

...specialty stores at home. But convenience comes at a price. An unfortunate downside of net auctions, says Coleman, is the prices of collectable pieces around New Zealand is increasing as local dealers join the cyber bazaar.

Payment: There are several options to pay for your net auction purchases. Cash through the mail is not recommended. Money orders are a reasonably safe bet...

...accepted at most major sites and many offer additional security. For example, PayDirect at Yahoo! Auctions lets you set up an online fund using your credit card.

The service allows you to pay or collect money from online auctions without having to mail a cheque or give credit card information to strangers. Check <http://help.yahoo.com/help/auctions/Escrow> also lets you sleep easy, but is more time consuming. The service, offered by Ebay and others, works by including a third party who holds your money while you await...

...purchase. Once the item is in your hands you okay the seller being paid.

Links

AuctionWatch .com

A great site for beginners, this will answer most questions and concerns.

<http://help.yahoo.com/help/auctions/>
Offers plenty of advice to get you started.

Amazon.com

Has a list of handy dos and don'ts.

ebay .com

A pioneering trader site and still one of the most popular.

And remember ...

Just...

...BladeForums.com, a US site specialising in knives and swords. You might post the winning bid, but it's highly likely that superbly crafted switchblade won't get any further than...

CAPTIONS: Brian Coleman has bid for hundreds of pieces of Royal Winton china on the internet.

20200009

2/3,KWIC/10 (Item 1 from file: 813)

DIALOG(R)File 813:PR Newswire

(c) 1999 PR Newswire Association Inc. All rts. reserv.

1402124

a1755

Targeted Internet streaming media launched by American Alliance

DATE: January 11, 1999

11:21 EST

WORD COUNT: 470

... and even upstart WorldCruncher Internet (OTC BB: WCTI). Who could have ever imagined that the auction business would create successes like Ubid (NASDAQ: UBID), eBay (NASDAQ: EBAY), Onsale (NASDAQ: ONSL) and Greg Manning Auctions (NASDAQ: GMAI)."

Mr. Wetzel continues, "Businesses one never imagined being on the Internet such as...

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T S2/3,AB/1-10

>>>No matching display code(s) found in file(s): 608, 755, 813

2/3,AB/1 (Item 1 from file: 20)
DIALOG(R)File 20:Dialog Global Reporter
(c) 2002 The Dialog Corp. All rts. reserv.

05400469

INSIDER TRADING - CHIRPING CELLPHONES ARE THE BANE OF SPEAKERS PRESENTATION

Iain Scott

BUSINESS DAY (SOUTH AFRICA), p2

May 13, 1999

JOURNAL CODE: FBUD LANGUAGE: English RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT

WORD COUNT: 1053

CHIRPING cellphones interrupt almost every occasion these days, but at an event like CellExpo, dedicated to mobile telephony, the noise level is almost unbearable.

Guest speaker Napa Maepa, the chairman of the SA Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, was bordering on exasperation as his audiences phones trilled, beeped and cheeped like a game of musical chairs.

2/3,AB/2 (Item 1 from file: 608)
DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.
(c)2002 Knight Ridder/Tribune Bus News. All rts. reserv.

06802876 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)

Bellevue, Wash., Man Sells Dolls in Likeness of Baseball Players

Luke Timmerman

2000

August , 2081

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 640

2/3,AB/3 (Item 2 from file: 608)
DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.
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06699300 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)

Toy Maker to Cease Sale of Beanie Babies

John Pletz

Austin American-Statesman, Texas

September 02, 1996

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 562

2/3,AB/4 (Item 3 from file: 608)
DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.
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06698352 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)

Austin, Texas, Internet Startups Stay Cloaked in Secrecy

Heather Cocks

Austin American-Statesman, Texas

August 28, 1996

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 1785

2/3,AB/5 (Item 4 from file: 608)
DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.
(c)2002 Knight Ridder/Tribune Bus News. All rts. reserv.

06684043 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)
Dell Launches Auction Site for Used Computers

Omar L. Gallaga

Austin American-Statesman, Texas

July 20, 1996

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 491

2/3,AB/6 (Item 5 from file: 608)

DIALOG(R)File 608:KR/T Bus.News.

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06644801 (USE FORMAT 7 OR 9 FOR FULLTEXT)

Austin, Texas, Firefighter's Virtual Persona Auctioned for \$521

Omar L. Gallaga

Austin American-Statesman, Texas

March 09, 1996

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

WORD COUNT: 267

2/3,AB/7 (Item 1 from file: 630)

DIALOG(R)File 630:Los Angeles Times

(c) 2002 Los Angeles Times. All rts. reserv.

01486009

ONLY IN L.A.

Heartbreak Hotel--for the Management

STEVE HARVEY

Los Angeles Times , Home Edition ed, colB, p3

Thursday December 16, 1999

DOCUMENT TYPE: Column

SECTION HEADING: Metro Desk

WORD COUNT: 484

2/3,AB/8 (Item 2 from file: 630)

DIALOG(R)File 630:Los Angeles Times

(c) 2002 Los Angeles Times. All rts. reserv.

01485965

STEVE HARVEY

The Beverly Wilshire: All Shook Up

STEVE HARVEY

Los Angeles Times , Orange County Edition ed, colB, p3

Thursday December 16, 1999

DOCUMENT TYPE: Column; Regional version of a story in Home Edition

SECTION HEADING: Metro Desk

WORD COUNT: 225

2/3,AB/9 (Item 1 from file: 755)

DIALOG(R)File 755:New Zealand Newspapers

(c) 2002 INL. All rts. reserv.

00549177 SST20000924-130147-MG (USE FORMAT 7 FOR FULLTEXT)

Internet nails the hammer

HENDERSON Mark

Sunday Star Times , A ed, colC, p11

24 SEP 2000

JOURNAL CODE: SST RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT

WORD COUNT: 00000996

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2/3,AB/10 (Item 1 from file: 813)

DIALOG(R)File 813:PR Newswire

(c) 1999 PR Newswire Association Inc. All rts. reserv.

1402124

a1755

Targeted Internet streaming media launched by American Alliance

DATE: January 11, 1919

11:21 EST

WORD COUNT: 470

?

2/9/4 (Item 3 from file: 608)

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Austin, Texas, Internet Startups Stay Cloaked in Secrecy

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Aug. 28--In a nondescript downtown Austin office, an Internet startup is hiding, tucked away above the din of blues rock music from Babe's Bar & Grill.

The "Titan Insurance" sign on the door is a disguise. Behind that mask is a plain office filled with brown folding chairs and rickety tables --clearly not a typical insurance office, but still nothing hinting at the e-commerce company that's developing there.

"Our first office purchase was a paper shredder," said NotHarvard.com co-founder Mike Rosenfelt, 32, who handles the company's marketing -- or lack thereof. "You can't be too careful."

It's the stuff of spy movies: false signs, fake business cards, layers of company code names and a series of cryptic Web sites. Family members are clueless about their relatives' new jobs, and recruits join the company on faith and curiosity alone. Even "NotHarvard.com" is a pseudonym.

Weeks away from publicly launching its site, the staff takes no chances.

Dozens of Internet companies sprang up last year in Austin alone, backed by a record flood of venture capital. In such a competitive market, young companies are realizing that a good idea is just a fraction of their business battle.

To win the war, they must tightly guard their business plans from copycats eager to cash in on the Internet gold rush.

Secrecy is their first line of defense.

"The Internet is easier to copy than any other industry around," said Seema Williams of Forrester Research Inc., a Massachusetts-based market research company. "Everyone tries to think outside the box, but the box keeps getting bigger. So it's quicker and simpler to copy, and there's money out there to fund it."

Because NotHarvard.com thinks it has carved out a unique niche combining e-commerce and education, Rosenfelt said its major goal is to be a household name -- the Amazon.com of its genre.

Still, the secrecy strategy does have its drawbacks. NotHarvard.com's idea germinated months ago, and from a publicity standpoint, that's a long time with no marketing message.

"There's a lot of pressure to go from as little publicity as possible to as much as you can get," said Rosenfelt, whose business card dubs him the company "Marketing Weasel." "You need to explode onto the scene. First-to-market advantage is everything."

But without testing the market before disclosure day, companies such as NotHarvard.com can't tell whether their strategies will, in fact, pay off.

And if they wait too long, another young business could snatch away that advantage, according to William Carner, senior lecturer for the University of Texas marketing department.

"There's a lot of nimble people out there that might tweak what you're already doing and get there first, and you're up a creek," Carner said. "And it's an industry where the competition reacts quickly, so it's just as easy to get eclipsed very quickly."

Still, even without advertising its Web site, NotHarvard.com gets about 1,000 visitors per day. The site contains just three short slogans

and a vague help-wanted ad, but curious jobhunters still submit resumes via e-mail, Rosenfelt said.

For that reason, he said he thinks the secrecy strategy can be a marketing campaign in itself.

"It's self-serving -- it creates a buzz," Rosenfelt said. "It tantalizes people."

The need for silence is part of any industry's life cycle as companies jockey for customers and the biggest chunk of market share.

"There's vast amounts of secrecy out there," said Carner, of UT. "Automobile companies have secret test facilities all over the country to keep designs under wraps. There's all kinds of corporate espionage that goes on."

Years ago, Carner said, Procter & Gamble Co. began testing a laundry tablet that combined detergent with fabric softener and bleach. The company tested it for almost eight months but did not guard its secret sufficiently from a watchful competitor, which developed its own version and beat Procter & Gamble to the market, Carner said.

But most tangible products -- from soap flakes to automobiles to computer components -- enjoy some protection in the form of patents that prevent competitors from cloning the idea.

Internet companies in large part lack that security.

"The reality is, the technology we use isn't groundbreaking. It's the ideas and how we implement them," Rosenfelt said. "You can't patent that, so there's very little precluding companies from grabbing our idea."

Add to that a growing pool of savvy programmers and the relative ease of starting an Internet company -- a Web address and computer code are the bricks and mortar of cyberspace -- and it's open season.

During its secrecy phase, Austin-based applianceOrder.com took just 45 days to build and launch its Web site, according to president Jason Wesbecher. Within three months of its launch, he said, the e-commerce company had captured 5 percent of the market.

"When you can use the Internet to build an e-commerce business that quickly, you constantly have to look over your shoulder at the competition," Wesbecher said. "The Internet totally changed the rules of the game -- you can't build a Best Buy in 45 days."

To adapt, the general game plan for Internet companies involves establishing a long-term strategy during the secrecy period, then bursting onto the scene with an intense marketing campaign.

But it can be tough to strike that delicate balance between a long-range focus and attention to shorter-term details.

"If you look too far ahead, someone in the marketplace could blow you out of the water," said Patrick Curry, 20, NotHarvard.com's chief technical officer. "Things are constantly changing, but we do need to think about all the long-term technical pieces that have to fit together."

Austin-based software company Motive Communications Inc. kept silent for 10 months before its May 1998 launch. Motive, which makes software that handles businesses' customer support, says it was one of the first high-tech companies to adopt those tactics.

Company Chief Executive Scott Harmon said he always planned two steps ahead, focusing on the current climate but paying close attention to market trends and evolutions.

"We look at who the new players will be and how the existing players will adjust and react to those things," Harmon said. "We know the market won't look like it does today."

NotHarvard.com has tried to cover all the bases. It files official documents under its attorney's name and asks employees to sign a nondisclosure form that, tongue-in-cheek, demands their first-born child if they break vows of silence.

Only the venture capitalists get the full story -- and they aren't talking, either.

"They rely on investors, so they have to reveal everything to raise money," said Eugene Lowenthal, a venture capitalist with Growth Capital Partners in Austin. "But investors don't want to see investments tank because of loose lips, and so are always interested in whatever protective measures a company takes."

For initial dealings with bankers, accountants and suppliers, the company created three layers of code names based on the amount of disclosure the situation warrants.

Rosenfelt said, "It makes us think about everything we do. We're not listed in the directory. The companies that wire us and run our phones --they don't even know who we are or what we do."

Hiring presents one of the trickiest challenges. NotHarvard.com asked that its recruiters try to sell the company without actually talking about its idea.

But to cull experts for its core staff, the founders had to stake a lot on their reputations, calling on trusted colleagues from other companies and from old business ventures.

One month ago, chief technical officer Curry called an old friend, Aaron Corcoran, to tell him about the company's network administrator position -- and didn't tell him anything else. Even so, at 8 a.m. the following Monday, Corcoran walked into IBM Corp.'s Louisiana office and quit his job. Five minutes later, he was on the road toward Austin.

"Everything was (based) on Patrick's reputation," said Corcoran, 22, now the network administrator at NotHarvard.com. "I didn't get all the pieces until a week after I started, but I trusted him, and I took the chance."

Faith in an idea means little if the company's debut is diluted by a flood of identical sites.

Williams of Forrester Research pointed to the recent surge in reverse-auction Web sites. In the past month, respond.com, eWanted.com and iWant.com all entered the marketplace with minor variations on the same basic theme -- buyers post messages about what they need and, in some cases, how much they're willing to pay. Sellers then contact buyers through e-mail.

"They came so fast that first-to-market advantage never became a factor," Williams said. "They haven't had time to build a customer base, so there's no good way to tell who's going to win. No one owns the marketplace."

And with no clear market winner, the door is open for established sites like Amazon.com and eBay to nip those companies' growth in the bud, Williams said.

Although they may not beat smaller companies to the market, huge e-commerce sites like Amazon.com and eBay can play on customer loyalty, use existing resources to add new e-commerce departments and keep their millions of customers from seeking services elsewhere.

"The Internet will be won and lost on creative business opportunities and marketing," said Wesbecher, of applianceOrder.com. "If you're in the Internet retailing business and you don't worry about Amazon.com, then you won't be in Internet retailing for long."

Before applianceOrder.com got started this year, Wesbecher and his staff relied on secrecy to help hone the e-commerce company's competitive edge.

But most of that strategy involved common sense, he said, not cloak-and-dagger tactics -- something Wesbecher said he thinks can be far more dramatic than the situation warrants.

"Everyone is out there in a wild, wild West fashion, trying to stake claim to new territory and establishing new laws," he said. "Anything goes. And things move so fast with the Internet, I shudder to think what it's going to be like a couple years from now."

"Hopefully, I'll be on a beach somewhere."

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